

NEWS UPDATE

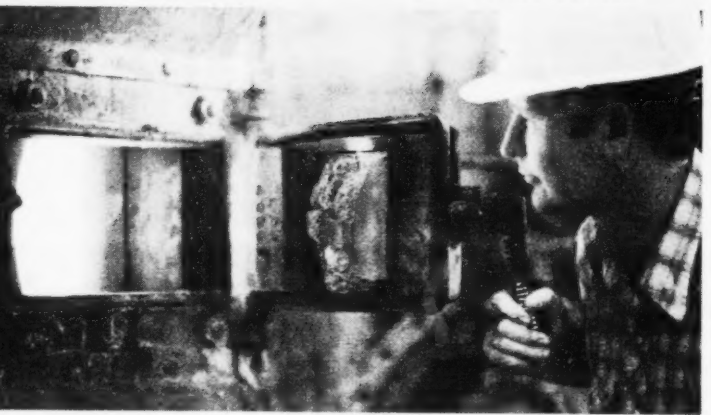
January 2007

WORK SAFE

WORKING TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE
worksafebc.com

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Teleclaim available on Vancouver Island

Vancouver Island residents who are injured at work can now file their claims for time loss more quickly and easily. In October, WorkSafeBC introduced Teleclaim, a new service centre that Vancouver Island workers can call to report injuries and receive personal assistance to help them with their recovery and return to work. The centre is open Monday through Friday, from 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m., at 1 888 WORKERS (1 888 967-5377), or #5377 for Telus Mobility, Rogers, and Bell Mobility customers. If your business is outside Vancouver Island, watch for more details on the availability of Teleclaim, coming to your area in 2007. For more information, visit www.worksafebc.com/news_room/features/new_60_220.asp.

GoldStar Clearances coming in 2007

Often, firms obtain clearance letters to prove they're registered with WorkSafeBC and paying regular premiums. Prime contractors frequently require clearances from subcontractors before hiring them, or they withhold final payments until the subcontractors have paid their WorkSafeBC premiums. This protects prime contractors from having to pay subcontractors' premiums should the subcontractors default.

This spring, WorkSafeBC will introduce GoldStar Clearances, giving qualifying firms pre-approved clearances up to the beginning of the next quarter. To qualify, firms must have had an active registration with WorkSafeBC for at least two years and be up to date on reporting payroll and paying premiums.

Visit WorkSafeBC.com in the coming months for details.

Status policy decision pending

In 2006, WorkSafeBC's Policy and Research Division consulted with stakeholders to gauge opinion on proposed amendments to assessment policies on workplace status, which define who is a worker, an employer, or an independent operator. If approved, the changes will significantly affect industries where contracting out is common practice, such as transportation, construction, and forestry. Stakeholders provided feedback on draft policies and the Board of Directors is now scheduled to make a decision on changes to the workplace status policies at the end of January. Information will be available on WorkSafeBC.com following the decision.

TIME SAVER



A faster way to report and pay premiums

Save time, paper, and postage when you use Fast File & Pay, an online service available at WorkSafeBC.com that allows you to quickly and easily report your payroll and pay your premiums. There's no need to sign up for our full range of online services. Try it now, instead of filling out and mailing the paper version of your 2006 Employer Payroll and Contract Labour Report, along with your payment.

If you prefer, you can also complete these transactions within minutes over the phone by calling our automated phone service at 604 244-6181 or 1 888 922-2768.

Many firms previously classified in General Retail (CU 741013) have been reclassified into one of four new retail classification units: Large Retail Stores (CU 741028); Flooring Stores (CU 741029); Convenience Stores, Farm Markets, or Specialty Food Stores (CU 741030); and Furniture Stores (CU 741031). The reassigned firms retain the same base rate as General Retail in 2007, but may see different rates in future years. You can view the new CU descriptions online at www.worksafebc.com/insurance/premiums/2007_rates/default.asp.

If you believe your firm should be classified in one of these new CUs and you were not notified of a reclassification, send an e-mail to classification@worksafebc.com.

Subscribe to WorkSafe Magazine

WorkSafe Magazine is published six times a year by WorkSafeBC and provides helpful tools for building a safer workplace.

To find out how to subscribe, visit WorkSafeMagazine.com.



Did You Know?

In 2005, 2.8 million days were lost from work due to work-related injuries in B.C.

Maximum wage rate to increase

The maximum wage rate and the maximum coverage for Personal Optional Protection (POP) insurance for 2007 increased on January 1, 2007. The maximum wage rate — that is, the maximum insurable earnings per worker or active shareholder for the year — increased to \$64,400 per worker in 2007, from \$62,400 in 2006, while the maximum allowable POP coverage grew to \$5,567 per month from \$5,200.

Changes to registration policy

WorkSafeBC's registration policy changed on January 1, 2007 to reflect a retroactivity period of three years. Employers who don't register as required will now be charged up to three years of retroactive premiums. (If there is evidence of wilful non-compliance, additional charges may apply.) By law, as soon as employers hire workers, they are required to register with WorkSafeBC and pay premiums. By increasing the period of retroactivity from one to three years, WorkSafeBC aims to increase registration compliance and foster a workers' compensation system that's more equitable for you and the other employers who fund it.

Has your business changed?

Sometimes, changes to your operations result in a new classification or different rate for your firm. If you have made — or plan to make — significant changes to your business, contact us to be sure your firm is appropriately classified and paying the correct rate. Also, contact us if you close your business or if you change your company's name, address, operating location, or type of operation.

To report these changes, call our Employer Service Centre at 604 244-6181 or 1 888 922-2768. You can also update your account information online by visiting WorkSafeBC.com and selecting "Update account info" under the "Insurance" heading.

Popular contacts

- Claims Call Centre 604 231-8888, toll-free 1 888 967-5377
- Employer Service Centre 604 244-6181, toll-free 1 888 922-2768
- Prevention Information Line 604 276-3100, toll-free 1 888 621-7233
- Human Resources 604 276-3009, toll-free 1 888 757-5552
- Report fraud 1 877 523-3315

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This newsletter is also available electronically on the WorkSafeBC web site at <http://www.worksafebc.com/publications/newsletters/access/>

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